

Excerpts for presentation,
presented by Emily Winslow and Tabitha Siklos
on Friday 3rd March in the Master's Lodge

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by Anonymous, Undergraduate

later years, the move underground was quieter. I was ten years old when my parents died in the Long Storms. After

by Anonymous, Undergraduate

So very long ago, we used to debate. I said we should fix what we have; he said it's too late, we should start anew. Then, the closer we grew, the more we fought. The more I needed him, the more viciously I fought him. Finally there was one day, when we were sitting together on the stone wall along the Cam, staring into the crystal-clear but lifeless water running its course down-stream, he suddenly took my hand.

"Hey."

I turned towards him, a strand of hair falling across my face. He reached to brush it away.

"Let's not fight anymore, okay?"

That was when I knew it was nearing the end. That was when I knew he was going to leave me. I choked up – couldn't speak – so I only tried to smile and nod. At that moment I suddenly realised (or perhaps finally knew for certain) that he was hurting too. That he'd tried to fight himself. For me. He put his arm around my shoulders, and we sat there, for only a moment or for eternity, I couldn't tell.

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by _____, Visiting Fellow

Even during the worst of it, all over the world the Artificers and the Inventors and the Entrepreneurs, funded by penitent billionaires, worked away until machine learning took over and the great singularity of Holores emerged and it was turned to good use, to make the human condition bearable, and it seemed like a

and hung up her jacket before he was dragging his grandma into the living room to start their weekly round of Ludo.

Mike was always the one to start and he was allowed to roll the die until he would get his first six. Being as excited as always, he began. A five. A three. A four. A two. A six. He placed his piece on the first position and rolled the die again. A one. She shuddered. No. This could not be true.

5, 3, 4, 2, 6, 1.

She grabbed a different die from the box and gave it to Mike.

by Anonymous, Undergraduate

Nika's eyes fluttered open, hesitantly, and still overcome by sleep. But the pain she felt in her chest became more vicious with each second which passed. She tried to brush it off by putting it down to a long night, and rolled over, closing her eyes tightly once more. Five seconds later, a tsunami of nausea gripped her. Nika sprang up from her bed and

by _____, Postgraduate

I walked to the large capsule at the back of the room, ringed by a spotless curved pane of glass. Behind, the subject raised his eyes. Life signs bleeped all around, telling me his heart rate, breathing patterns, brain waves, chemical composition. But his eyes, deep yellow and slanted, were lifeless.

by _____, Staff

Hester awoke suspended in a rosy mist, her ship gently orbiting 442-b. The planet was swathed in an undulating cloud of dust thrown from its pockmarked, ochreous face. Hester pressed her face up against the glass, her misting breath blending with the surreal splendour of the scene below. It was only her shallow breathing, the empty echoing creak of the spaceship, and the low humming of the blood in her head that seemed to thrum in time to the shifting mist – until a crackling voice jarred her out of her stunned reverie.

“Come in, Major Moon,” was repeated three times with increasing urgency before it entered her consciousness. Hester fumbled around in a clumsy panic for her transmitter.

by

As she crossed the road Ezra caught sight of a child wailing, her mother was hushing her as she wiped the blood from her knee – it was only a small graze. People stopped and stared all around, this was why people rarely brought their children out, they hadn't yet learned how to kill their emotions. Ezra continued walking, she expected the world to resume, for the child to be hushed back into their home and the people to turn away and carry out their business. But this didn't happen, what Ezra failed to see the first time she looked was the child's face which was red and puffy, water streaming down her cheeks. She hadn't seen tears in years – children were mandated to wear their masks in public, so why had this child not done so?

The sight of the child made Ezra uncomfortable, she hadn't seen eyes like those in a long time, they were eyes without indifference. They weren't cold like her own, or like Dr Boa's.

If Ezra were in the times before Arthur Mackfield she was say she was shocked, or disturbed.

Her hands began to feel clammy, she couldn't take her eyes off the child's face that looked so much like how she felt when the world seemed to be against her, when she looked in the mirror and saw her limp hair and dull eyes, when she wondered how long she could keep this up – the blank day and night of life.

lain there, feigning death. She could never return to Earth. Her heart beat painfully, hot tears coursing down her cheeks as she thought of her parents – but she couldn't let this planet die.

The sky outside the ship was beginning to lighten, and Hester's pain mingled with great peacefulness as she watched the sun slowly rise on the planet that she'd saved. The dawn was more beautiful here than on Earth after all.